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# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

BROADCAST BY STATIONS OF THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING CO.

DECEMBER 6, 1945



## Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?

*Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.*

### *Speakers*

FRANK MILES

CHARLES GUY BOLTE

RAYMOND S. McLAIN

EDWIN C. JOHNSON

*(See also page 12)*

### COMING

—December 13, 1945—

### Can We Have Higher Wages Without Higher Prices?

—December 20, 1945—

### Should Colonial Empires Be Liquidated?

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THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 6:

**"Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?"**

<i>Mr.</i> DENNY .....	3
<i>Mr.</i> MILES .....	4
<i>Mr.</i> BOLTE .....	6
<i>General</i> McLAIN .....	9
<i>Senator</i> JOHNSON .....	11
THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN .....	12
QUESTIONS, PLEASE! .....	16



THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 13:

**"Can We Have Higher Wages Without Higher Prices?"**



THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 20:

**"Should Colonial Empires Be Liquidated?"**

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# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



DECEMBER 6, 1945

VOL. 11, No. 32

## Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?

### Announcer:

Town Hall and the American Broadcasting Company welcome you to another stirring session of America's Town Meeting, the program that gives both sides of issues affecting your life and mine. Tonight here at Town Hall, New York, four authorities clash over the question, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?" To open this important session, here is the President of Town Hall, founder and moderator of America's Town Meeting, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. This is the third program we've done this year on universal military training, but perhaps it's appropriate that we do another on the eve of Pearl Harbor Day. Some of you will remember the first one, when George Fielding Eliot and Professor Alonzo Myers joined

issues on the question last January supported by four prize-winning high school students. Then Burgess Meredith and Dr. Edward C. Elliott locked horns with Senator Taft and Felix Morley on this subject last July.

But two significant and epoch-making events have taken place in the meantime. My friend Norman Cousins said that was a thousand years ago. The San Francisco Charter has been approved by the United States Senate and 46 other countries, and the atomic bomb has put a sudden end to World War II. In the light of the swift-moving events of this crucial year, particularly the invention of the atomic bomb and the establishment of the United Nations Organization, we again turn to this important question, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?"

Three veterans of World War II, two of them also veterans of World War I, and a United States Senator will lead our discussion.

Lt. General Raymond S. McLain, Commanding General of the 19th Corps which operated in France and Germany, and Frank Miles of Des Moines, Iowa, round-the-world correspondent for National American Legion publications are for universal military training now. Senator Edwin C. Johnson, Democrat of Colorado and acting chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, and Charles Guy Bolte, Chairman of the American Veterans' Committee and author of the new book, *The New Veteran*, say no.

Now in order to encourage good questions — questions which will aid in bringing out more facts and clarifying the discussion — Town Hall is offering a \$25 Victory Bond for the question which, in the opinion of our committee of judges, is considered best for this purpose. Either questions sent in by mail or questions asked by members of the audience here in Town Hall are eligible, but all questions must be limited to 25 words. I hope that will be effective. For tonight, only the questions already received by mail and the questions from the audience here at Town Hall can be considered. We will tell you about next week's topic and how you can participate in next week's question period at the close of this program.

But now let's start tonight's discussion with the representatives of two veterans' organizations. First,

Frank Miles of the American Legion, editor of the *Iowa Legionnaire* of Des Moines, Iowa. Mr. Miles. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Miles:**

If professional advice is needed, it is wise to consult one who knows the profession. If agricultural, a farmer; if business, a businessman; if labor, a laborer. When I want military advice, I consult military authorities — and I don't mean chairborne commandos or politicians. Most men who are or have been in the military—officers and GI's and gobs—earnestly believe universal military training for American boys between 18 and 20 years of age is vitally necessary now. Senator and Mr. Bolte, 80 per cent of World War II veterans queried by the Gallup Poll last month answered yes on this question.

American Army and Navy leaders, products of West Point and Annapolis, those who have gone into service from the Reserves and National Guards, and those who have climbed from the ranks, topped by General Eisenhower and Admiral Nimitz, measure up mentally, morally, and spiritually with men and women of any other vocation in our country.

We have, indeed, been lucky in two wars. More than a year elapsed after our declaration on Germany in 1917 before we were able to strike a solid blow. Friends, do you realize that, in 1939, if

Germany and Japan had decided to conquer us via South America, they could have done it, because we were then too weak militarily to resist? The Germans could have occupied the British Isles after Dunkirk and thereby seized the British navy and air forces, which would have given the Axis most of the naval and air strength of the Eastern Hemisphere to pit against our then puny sea and sky fleets.

If Japan had known the fearful damage her bombers did at Pearl Harbor, she could have swiftly captured the Hawaiian Islands and assaulted our Pacific coast by air and sea. If Germany had had V-1's and V-2's, jet-planes, and underground production plants two years earlier than she did, the war in Europe might still be raging—or over with a different conclusion. Who would not say that if Germany or Japan had been first to discover the atomic bomb we might now be prostrate? Lack of preparedness cost us heavily in lives and suffering in both conflicts. To help perpetuate peace is as great an obligation as to fight for peace.

Senator and Mr. Bolte, I hate all elements here who foment race prejudice, religious intolerance, and class strife, for internal unity and peace is fully as essential as it is during war. I deplore the baiting of Britain, the ragging of Russia, and the chopping of China, for they incite undue animosity

toward proved precious friends. I want my country to provide all possible aid to the hungry and otherwise suffering peoples of the whole world, for tortured humans cannot be tranquil. I am for the establishment of a world order through which war would be effectively outlawed.

But, under existing chaotic conditions and the present menace of the atomic bomb or like deadly weapons, why can't you, Senator and Mr. Bolte, agree we should keep strong enough to either discourage potential aggressors or meet treachery at a moment's notice? Undoubtedly, weapons to counter the new ones are being invented. Is there, then, any policy so sane as to have millions of men trained to operate all of the most modern military weapons with plenty of weapons to be operated?

A standing armed force sufficient for our needs would be militaristic, therefore undemocratic and excessively expensive. The American alternative is universal training of our youth, under a system through which it would be exalted as service to promote peace. The spirit of Americans All is far more pronounced in men in uniform than in those in civilian garb. Mental and physical discipline benefits anyone, and for youth would be a present and future conduct regulator and a bodybuilder.

The recent American Legion National Convention of delegates

who served in both world wars unanimously resolved to "urge Congress to enact immediately a universal military training law to be administered by a civilian authority, and specifically providing for a 12-month period of required training which will consist of a period of adequate basic training common to all trainees and a remaining period either in advanced technical or scientific training upon qualification therefor, or its equivalent in the regular establishment or the civilian component to the armed forces, or in advanced ROTC's. All of which training should be under the general direction of the regular establishments of the armed forces. The induction for such training to be at the age of 18 years, or upon graduation from high school—whichever is later. But in any event, before his 20th birthday, and that the basic training shall, if practicable, be at a facility in close proximity to the trainee's home."

This is the best plan yet proposed, though I wish it called for complete co-ordination with education for future careers. I pray that my country will exert the utmost efforts to create peace on earth with honor and security for all peoples, but I can see nothing inconsistent in our being strong enough to guarantee our living while engaged in such noble endeavor. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Frank Miles. Now let us hear from another veteran, author of the book, *The New Veteran*, who's also chairman of a veterans' organization called the American Veterans' Committee. I give you a man who fought in this war, who lost a leg, and who's doing a great job for citizenship in this country now—Charles Guy Bolte. (*Applause.*)

#### **Mr. Bolte:**

Mr. Miles is correct, I think, when he says we must be prepared militarily until the world is organized for peace. Our difference is in the kind of military preparedness we advocate.

Let me first announce that the policy of the American Veterans' Committee in regard to this question, decided upon at a recent meeting of AVC's National Planning Committee, is that a vote should be postponed by the Congress until 80% of the wartime armed forces have been demobilized. (*Applause.*) We feel that the men who fought the war should have a chance to express their views on this all-important subject. They cannot effectively express their views until they are civilians again.

It is obvious, then, that I am speaking for myself, tonight, and not for the American Veterans' Committee. It seems to me that there is only one test to which we should put this question—"Will

universal military training adopted now contribute substantially to the national defense?" We confuse ourselves on the issue, it seems to me, when we argue in favor of the incidental benefits of military training, or when we deplore the secondary hurts of the system.

It is conceivable that military training teaches some young men discipline, and how to brush their teeth, and how to get along with others—although I am sure there must be better ways of teaching this than to put young men in the army. (*Applause.*) It's also conceivable that military training takes youths away from home and Mother at a too tender age, interferes with their schooling, and might even lead to an undemocratic concentration of power in the hands of the professional army, although I must respectfully disagree with my distinguished colleague of the evening, Senator Johnson, that universal military training is the first step toward Fascism.

The point I'm trying to make is that these questions, diverting as they are, have nothing to do with the case.

The question we need answer is, "Will universal military training adopted now contribute substantially to the national defense?" Four months ago, my answer was yes; tonight, it is no. The explosion at Hiroshima four months ago today, of course, was the chief

factor that made me change my mind.

But there have been other factors—the revelation of further weapons we and our enemies developed in the recent war. We have learned of the jet plane, the high-speed submarine which need not surface at all, radar, radar countermeasures, the pilotless explosives of the V-1 and V-2 family, and the proximity fuse which makes it possible for an antiaircraft shell to track an aircraft and to explode at the critical moment. Yet these are weapons of the past war, not of the next.

When one considers the enormous acceleration in technology at the present time, one's imagination can barely stretch to see the picture of another war. Yet the most important task before us is to stretch our imaginations in just this way. If we do, we see a war, ten or twenty years from now, in which the leaders of a nation or nations decide that relations with the United States have deteriorated to the point where further conversation is useless.

They launch, from any place on the earth, high-altitude, rocket-propelled atomic missiles which seek out their targets by radar. These rockets travel faster than sound. The first news we have that we are at war is when we, if we are lucky enough to live in the country, wake up in the morning to find our twenty-five principal

cities leveled and forty million of our people killed. We, of course, have our own rocket-launching sites dispersed. We retaliate, and destroy many of the enemy's cities and industrial installations. Each antagonist flies in waves of airborne troops, bringing his own tanks and armored cars to seize such of his opponent's key points as are left intact. The victory, if you care to call this a victory, is won by him who first destroys the other's launching sites and occupies his key points.

Now, this is not fantasy. It is a picture of another war as presented by General Arnold, commanding the Army Air Forces, and by Dr. Oppenheimer, who constructed the first atomic bomb. Where, in this war, do we use two, or three, or four million men who have had a year's training in basic weapons and tactics of the past war? How are they summoned together? Where do they fight? Where's there time in which they can be retrained for the complex tasks of atomic and airborne warfare? I submit that, by this test, military training now does not contribute substantially to the national defense. Even worse, it is likely to give us a sense of false security that will make us forget the real essentials of the program we must adopt if we are to survive.

Our chief efforts must go toward preventing that next war, not to-

ward winning it. (*Applause.*) We must create a world controlling authority over armaments. That means inspection of every nation's industrial facilities to make sure that atomic power is not being developed for military purposes. That means policemen to make the inspections. That means courts to pass judgments on what policemen uncover. And that means world federal government. Until this is achieved, we need a national defense policy based on scientific research and development, on a highly mobile airborne army, on unification of the armed forces, and on a world-wide intelligence service. We do not need universal military training to carry out this policy. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Bolte. Thank you very much. While I was speaking of losses, I should have said that our previous speaker, Mr. Miles, is a veteran of the first war himself and a correspondent in this last war, gave two sons in this war, and lost one of them.

General McLain was born in Kentucky and raised in Oklahoma. What a Midwest record that is! An officer of the National Guard, he was called actively in this war, rose to the rank of Lieutenant General, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1943. Until recently, he was Commanding General of the 19th Corps, and is now on leave awaiting assign-

ment. Again I take the opportunity to thank and congratulate the War Department for allowing us to present one of its ablest generals in a public discussion of this important question. It's certainly in accord with the finest traditions of free speech and open discussion. General McLain, we're delighted to welcome you to the Town Hall platform. General Raymond S. McLain. (*Applause.*)

**General McLain:**

The views which I present are from my experience in the past 33 years as a civilian soldier in the militia, on the Mexican border in 1916-17, in World War I, in the new National Guard, and then in World War II—twenty days in combat in World War I and more than 550 days in actual combat in this war. Three times I've gone through the process of mobilization under emergency call of the President. Eight years in the past thirty I've served as an emergency soldier. I think that is a fair answer to those who believe we need no longer prepare for war.

If we postpone action on this question now, who is there with the perspective to say now or in the future when we should reconsider it? We are now liquidating our wartime Army. Therefore, now is the proper and logical time to not only consider but to determine this question. Postponement now is really a death sentence. To reconsider in an emer-

gency would only embarrass us at a critical time and aggravate the situation.

Universal training, Mr. Bolte, in my opinion, is the only answer to an adequate national defense. That is, one full, continuous year of unqualified military training, concluding with exercises of combined arms under field conditions, coupled with industrial mobilization and scientific research and development. There is no adequate substitute.

If that is true, as I believe it is, all sidelights on the question are beside the point and lack validity. Since some questions have been raised, I will discuss a few briefly. Will the atomic bomb and other scientific developments be an adequate substitute? I do not pretend to know the capabilities or the limitations of these new means of destruction. I know that every improvement in explosives in the past has led to larger armies. Military training will prepare men to meet disasters caused by bombing; it will prepare them for all eventualities.

The pattern of war has changed. War is no longer confined to the battlefields, to the struggle of one army against another. War is multidimensional. It is waged by a whole people against every phase of life, both civil and military. The home front is as active and as vulnerable as the army. The velocity of war has reached the stage where unreadiness is fatal. Unprepared-

ness is inexcusable. Air power and amphibious operations have changed methods of the conduct of this last war. Atomic developments and speeds faster than sound have opened a vista of immediate changes much more radical, in which the velocity of war has increased to unimaginable rates.

Can national security be guaranteed by a voluntary force alone? I think not. I question the voluntary system both on practical and moral grounds. Voluntary forces fluctuate. The system is uncertain. It is undemocratic, and it is unfair. The doors should never be closed to the voluntary in peacetime, but the thing should be brought into balance with a fair distribution of the ultimate burden of national defense responsibility by definite machinery—in peacetime, voluntary service and compulsory training; in wartime, selective service.

I've seen commanders in the field call for volunteers on the battlefield for a hazardous mission. I've seen heroic souls volunteer time and again, until they were no more. Not a chance! Because of this, I forbade any such inequality in my command. The hero has as much right to the chance to live as his less gallant comrades. His family has a right to expect him to be protected.

• I do not discount the efforts of earnest men to set up peace machinery. We owe it to civilization

to keep at this effort with all sincerity and all diligence. But should we rest our security on it even before the machinery is created? It is my judgment that the existence of a strong military position will do a great deal to make these efforts effective and favorable. After having created a practical formula for permanent peace, after having set up the machinery to implement this formula, would it be unreasonable to ask that we see it in operation, under test, before we rest our security on it? As history treats time in its course, would an experience of 50 years' successful operation be unreasonable?

We need universal training to strengthen our leadership. You cannot create leadership by education alone. Education is a vital and necessary background. Leadership must be developed over long periods of time by actual experience. We have fought two major wars against two of the strongest military forces the world has ever known. That we were successful with only a million casualties is a great tribute to our field forces, but we were so only after four years of training. We cannot again expect such a windfall of time.

Mr. Miles, I think you are right on that point. I am sure it would give these boys individual opportunities of leadership they cannot get elsewhere. Their experience

will help them in the uncertain times of their future. They will need it. We need universal military training now. The burden of national defense in these tense and critical times must be borne by all alike and equally. That is practical; that is fair and democratic; that is good morals. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:**

Thank you, General McLain. Senator Edwin C. Johnson, Democrat of Colorado, is one of the busiest men in the United States Senate. He has given a great deal of thought to this question as a member, and until recently acting chairman, of the Senate Military Affairs Committee and as a member of the Senate Committee on Atomic Power. We are fortunate indeed to have this expert's opinion on this question, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?" Senator Johnson of Colorado. (*Applause.*)

**Senator Johnson:**

Mr. Miles would go to the brass hats for advice on all military questions. I remind him that Clemenceau, the old Tiger of France, who had much to do with war in his long and notable career, had this to say, "War is too serious to leave entirely to the military." I cannot agree with General McLain either that universal military training adds anything to national defense in this atomic age.

However, I do not care to emphasize unduly the element of "now" in the subject under discussion tonight. At this very moment, in addition to the creation of the atomic bomb and the formation of the United Nations Organization, every warlike nation capable of aggression is prostrate and exhausted while the United States, long the world's most powerful nation, enjoys its greatest military strength in history. If we do not train another man for five years, we will still have millions of men trained for war.

It seems paradoxical that the nation which loves peace the most and is the most devoted to real and genuine democracy is also the world's mightiest military power. It should be our foremost objective to see to it that this happy combination endures. Our defenses must be so strong that there will be no question of our military security, nor of our capacity to fulfill the commitments we have assumed to stop wars of aggression. How to implement that high resolve with the least disturbance to our unique system of democracy and competitive enterprise is the challenge of this hour.

General McLain, my approach to the problem of military preparedness is that physical fitness, mental alertness, and highly developed technical and scientific skills are the basic requisites for

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**EDWIN C. JOHNSON**—The senior Senator from Colorado is the second ranking member of the Senate's Military Affairs Committee. He has been in the Senate since 1937 and was recently re-elected for the term which ends in 1949. Senator Johnson was a railroader, a homesteader, and the manager of a farmer co-operative before entering public service as lieutenant governor and then for two terms (1933-37) as governor of the State of Colorado. He is a Democrat.

**FRANK MILES**—A veteran of two wars, Mr. Miles recently has been war correspondent for the publications of the American Legion. He is now the editor of the *Iowa Legionnaire*.

**RAYMOND S. McLAIN**—Lieutenant General McLain, the commanding general of the 19th Corps, is also a veteran of two wars. He has been a realtor and an investment banker in Oklahoma. He served in the Army from 1917 to 1919. In World War II, he rapidly rose to his present rank and command.

**CHARLES GUY BOLTE**—*Who's Who* states that the name is pronounced bōl tā. Mr. Bolte is a Dartmouth man who went into the newspaper profession. He has been a special writer for the Office of War Information and has been a military correspondent for *The Nation*. From 1941 to 1943, he served in the British Army. He is the organizer and chairman of the American Veterans' Committee.

military security in this modern world. (*Applause*.)

While our military security is too vital to adopt a "pinchy" financial policy, yet our unfavorable public debt situation demands great caution and prudence in the expenditure of federal funds. We dare not waste a dollar. Accordingly, I have made a searching and comprehensive examination of the budgetary problem involved, and I have uncovered a startling set of facts.

In these dollar and cents calculations, I have been ultraconservative and have given the advocates of universal military training the benefit of every doubt. But, you can't argue with arith-

metic. I have set up a five-year plan alongside of their horse-and-buggy conception of national defense, and frankly, folks, the results are positively astounding. Once my plan is carefully analyzed and evaluated, we will hear no more of the proposal to impose conscription, the Prussian-conceived system of military slavery, upon the youth of America.

Briefly, I propose to build, equip, and staff an average of ten gymnasiums, together with swimming pools and playgrounds, in every county in the United States. I propose to provide a course of physical education in every public school in the United States and pay the salaries of the necessary

qualified instructors. I propose to set up in every county in the United States sufficient child clinics to check and recheck the health of every child every six months. At every college and university, I would build, equip, and staff a chemistry and physics laboratory for experiments and research in the lethal weapons of war. I would give 100,000 hand-picked, carefully selected, very young boys a thorough five-year course in aeronautics, electronics, and aviation—graduating 20,000 each year.

Far from our coast line I would build, equip, and fortify a series of island air bases entirely surrounding the United States, and, in addition, I would maintain 70 or more strategically located air bases on this continent. I would man and equip a Navy and Merchant Marine sufficiently strong to serve that system of far-flung air bases. I would provide ROTC training in all of our high schools and colleges on a volunteer basis, and I would subsidize and encourage National Guard training in every state in the Union. I would provide an espionage system that would know what every nation on the globe was doing in military matters.

I would do all of these things and more—and listen to this, General McLain and Mr. Miles — I would do all of these things and more at a much lower over-all cost than is planned for our national

defense by the advocates of conscription. (*Applause.*) I challenge my opponents to place their plan alongside of mine and compare its costs and its value, item by item. If they will do that, conscription will be dead in America. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Senator Johnson. Now, gentlemen, I think we can dig a little deeper into this question if you will join me up here around the microphone for a few minutes before we let the audience in on this discussion. Mr. Miles, we haven't heard from you for a while. I wonder if you have a question for either of these gentlemen.

**Mr. Miles:** Only a suggestion to Senator Johnson—that I personally would rather put the problem of our national defense in the hands of the military brass hats than in the hands of the political brass hats. (*Applause.*) I admired Mr. Bolte's talk a lot, but may I ask you, Mr. Bolte, if you wouldn't have us working just as hard to be sure that we win the war as we work to prevent a war in the future?

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Bolte.

**Mr. Bolte:** I believe I said, Mr. Miles, two or three times in the course of my speech, that we differed in our approach to national defense. I certainly agree that until the machinery for peace is set up, we must have some national defense machinery. I wouldn't

say national security, because I think in the kind of world you are living in today there is no such thing as security any more. Those weapons mean that there is no security for anybody. I would like to shoot a question back at General McLain who said, "I do not pretend to know the capabilities and limitations of these new means of destruction." Now, Mr. Miles just said, "When I want military advice I consult military authorities." (*Laughter and applause.*) I would like to know if General McLain intends to find out himself the potentialities of nuclear fission or whether he is going to call on a scientist to tell him.

**Mr. Denny:** General McLain. It's your turn.

**General McLain:** The last that I heard on this subject, the scientists themselves said they didn't know. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Bolte.

**Mr. Bolte:** Just very quickly there I would like to say that I know one of the scientists who was most influential in the building of the atomic bomb—a name that you would all recognize—who said privately a month ago that the present proposals of the Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff for national defenses were ludicrous, and he chose his words very carefully.

**Mr. Denny:** Now, here's a Senator who is a member of the

Atomic Bomb Committee—Senator Johnson.

**Senator Johnson:** Yes, Mr. Denny, I've been sitting in what we term down there the "chamber of horrors." That's our committee hearing on the atomic bomb. We have had the scientists, the physicists, before us. We have had them in open session and we have had them in closed session. And to tell you the truth—I'm getting pretty creepy.

This is the first time in my life that I have ever believed that ignorance is bliss. General McLain's treatment of the atomic bomb is characteristic of both the Army and the Navy. They refuse to admit that there is such a thing in this world as the atomic bomb, and they are going to have to be blasted out of that "Maginot Line" that they have constructed.

**Mr. Denny:** General, you had better come up here to the front now.

**General McLain:** Yes, sir. I'd like to ask Mr. Bolte a question. I've used most of these weapons that he's talked about. I haven't used the atomic bomb, I'll admit that. But, let's admit that the atomic bomb is as destructive as we have read that it is. And let's admit, as Mr. Bolte has stated here, that suddenly we're struck like we were struck at Pearl Harbor, and that Detroit, Chicago, and New York, St. Louis, and San Francisco, and a bunch of our cities suddenly

find themselves destroyed by atomic bombs. Now, this world is very big, and you can't destroy the whole thing. If you don't believe it's big, get up in an airplane and take a look at it. Now, I'd like to ask Mr. Bolte after that happens, then what?

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Bolte, the affirmative is yours now.

**Mr. Bolte:** I think that what the General said at the beginning is a very interesting example of what I may call, without undue irreverence, the military mind at work—pardon me, General. You notice he talked about *if* the atomic bomb is as destructive as we hear it is. Now, I must point out to you that the bomb dropped at Hiroshima was rendered absolescent by the time the next bomb was dropped at Nagasaki. Both bombs are now looked upon by atomic scientists as being somewhat comparable to the crossbow. (*Laughter.*)

The bomb dropped at Nagasaki released only 1/100th of one per cent of the energy contained in the uranium in the bomb. Now, that is being speeded up. There is every likelihood that the destructive capacity of the bomb will be increased very shortly by 100 times, and before very much longer by 1,000 times. In other words, instead of destroying four square miles, you have a very good chance of destroying 40 square miles or more.

Well, granted that you don't destroy all the land surface of the United States, then I think, General, the answer to your question to me is more or less what I said in my speech. That you have your launching sites well dispersed, when the enemy's attack comes in you promptly launch a counterattack, and you destroy a large number of his cities. Except, he is the one who is the aggressor. He knows when he is going to strike, and, therefore, he has gone ahead and made his preparations by dispersing his cities, putting his industrial installations underground, and spreading his population around. You don't hit him as hard. He then comes in with a second blow while you're getting ready to go again.

Well, now in all that—and as you say, General, the velocity of war is increasing tremendously—there doesn't seem to be much chance for a long war to take place. And I would say again that the war would be won by him who gets in first with his airborne troops and seizes the other's launching sites. And in that situation I just don't see where all these millions of trained reserves are going to be useful. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Wasn't there a famous general who said that "him who gets there firstest wins the mostest." That was before the bomb.

**General McLain:** They were pretty good fighters in that day, and war hasn't changed very much in spite of all these new weapons. I think Mr. Bolte has indicated the answer to my question. That is, it takes ground troops to do it. I've never seen the situation—and we've bombed some areas in Europe tremendously—but there's never been a time, though, when the ground troops didn't have to follow up and do the mopping up. I've found that the average human being is a pretty tough animal, and he's pretty ingenious. And I don't believe there is any such bombing that would do any enemy any good.

If he wanted to destroy the whole face of the earth, maybe so. But any bombing has got to be limited to a certain extent before it would do him any good because he wants to move in and take what we've got. That's the purpose of the war. And, therefore, if he gives us a chance, we're going to dig in, and a lot of us are

going to survive, and you can't make me believe anything else.

**Mr. Denny:** Well, we've got a good—thank you, General—we've got a good lively audience here now. It's almost time to let them in on the discussion, so let's pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting, brought to you by Town Hall and the American Broadcasting Company. Tonight, Lt. General Raymond S. McLain, Senator Edwin C. Johnson, and veterans Frank Miles and Charles Guy Bolte are discussing the vital question, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?" For a complete copy of this discussion, including the question period immediately following, send for the Town Meeting Bulletin. Just write to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Enclose ten cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Be sure to include your zone number and allow at least two weeks for delivery. Mr. Denny.

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## QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

**Mr. Denny:** I'm sure now we're ready for the questions from this representative Town Hall audience. As I told you before, in order to encourage good questions—questions which will aid in bringing out the facts and clarifying the discussion—Town Hall is offering a \$25 Victory Bond for the ques-

tion which, in the opinion of our committee of judges, is considered the best for this purpose. The question may be sent in by mail for next week's program, and must reach us not later than Wednesday noon before the broadcast. Address your questions to Town Hall, New York 18. But tonight,

we're limiting our questions to the questions that have already been sent in and the questions from the audience here. Remember, limit your questions to 25 words. We'll start with the lady in the gray hat there.

*Lady:* Mr. Bolte. Won't universal training with necessary indoctrination develop a real sense of responsibility to keep the peace and avoid a war as horrible as you describe?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Bolte.

*Mr. Bolte:* I would certainly agree that a year in the army is enough to make anybody dislike war. (*Laughter and applause.*) I must say again, though, that I think there must be some easier way of developing that responsibility to keep the peace than just making a man dislike the army.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman in the brown coat.

*Man:* Mr. Miles, please. I've heard just about enough nonsense about protecting an imaginary line somewhere in the Pacific. It's about time we got down to some basic truths.

*Mr. Denny:* You're making yourself ineligible for the \$25. Well, go ahead.

*Man:* The basic truth I want to get down to is the fact that man's development mentally has not kept pace with his development scientifically or physically.

*Mr. Denny:* Question, please.

*Man:* The question is, "How will a military machine developed in this country develop the proper state of mind, develop the proper thinking in our youth and in the people in the country?"

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Miles.

*Mr. Miles:* The military in America is for defense, and through that indoctrination the youth of America will be taught in the service that they're there to defend America.

*Mr. Denny:* Well, do you want to add anything to that, General McLain?

*Mr. Denny:* Well, all right, I recognize in the audience one of our former speakers on this question, Dr. Alonzo Myers. Dr. Myers, do you have a question, Sir?

*Dr. Myers:* For General McLain.

*Mr. Denny:* Yes, sir.

*Dr. Myers:* Why should we not first try to persuade our Allies, Britain and Russia, to join with us in outlawing peacetime conscription throughout the world? (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* General McLain.

*General McLain:* I think we should keep that between our Allies, before the public, before the world, as one of our foremost missions, but I do not think we should neglect our security while that's going on because we don't know when it can be effected. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The lady please.

*Lady:* Senator Johnson. As long as you don't want universal conscription here and we want to keep the peace throughout the entire world, why don't you tackle one of the biggest factors in the world, and, instead of having money with exchange, have a universal monetary system doing away with exchange?

*Mr. Denny:* Senator, we've gotten into money now.

*Senator Johnson:* Yes, all Colorado people are very much interested in that, and I could take the rest of the evening giving you an answer. But, Mr. Denny says I can't even talk about it.

*Mr. Denny:* I don't think we'd better get lost on the subject of money. Thank you. Let's take another question for the Senator. The gentleman in the red tie. That's a good looking red tie, too. (*Laughter.*)

*Man:* Senator Johnson, is it wiser or better for America to prepare for war and work for peace, or if war comes the nation is found not prepared?

*Senator Johnson:* I say prepare for war and work for peace. But the only thing that I complain about in your compulsory military training is that it is a miserable preparation for war. The war has gone on, and left folks who advocate that sort of thing standing by

the wayside. You're a thousand years behind your day.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman here.

*Man:* Mr. Bolte, if future victory comes to the side which first captures undestroyed enemy strategic points, is this not in itself a strong argument for universal training?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Bolte.

*Mr. Bolte:* I believe, sir, that's the same point that General Marshall made in his report. I think if what we have heard about the shape of the next war from General Arnold and Dr. Oppenheimer and the others means anything and has any validity at all, it would convince us that there's not going to be time to call up, to mobilize, retrain, and re-equip all the reserves who have had this year's training. What we need to seize those bases is a small professional airborne army which will carry its own tanks and mobile equipment with it when it flies. That is the kind of thing that is going to be useful in stopping an atomic war before you're destroyed—not training millions of troops who are scattered all over the country and who will lull us into a sense of false security about our necessary developments in science and in the professional striking force we need. (*Applause.*)

*Man:* General McLain, if another war will be fatal and last only a few hours, what can the

military do—and is it not better to stop wars through UNO?

*General McLain:* Young man, I respect your judgment. I wonder what experience, though, is behind it. I'm not sure at all that the next war will last only a few hours. Every war in the past has lasted about four years. I feel quite certain the next war will probably last as long. There might be phases of it which will be decided in a few hours. I agree with you on that. But man, who respects liberty and who loves liberty, is going to fight until he achieves liberty. We've always done that, and I think this Nation will always do it. As I said awhile ago, he's a tough animal, and if the surface of the earth gets too hot, he'll dig into the center of it somewhere and stay there and crawl out when it's a little more healthy. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, General. You've brought Mr. Bolte to his feet here.

*Mr. Bolte:* I would like to add a footnote to what the General said. General Eisenhower, in a speech two weeks ago arguing for universal military training—the best argument for it I've seen—said it may be that in another war the ancient virtues of stamina and integrity and courage will have no further place, whatsoever. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* All right. Pretty

dark picture, there, Mr. Bolte. All right.

*Lady:* If you are to consult the military on military matters, I wonder why if a fellow officer of the General's had been opposed to military training, the War Department would, in all likelihood, not have allowed him to speak here tonight.

*Mr. Denny:* What's that?

*Lady:* If one of the General's fellow officers had been opposed to universal military training, the War Department would probably not allow him to speak here tonight.

*Mr. Denny:* Well, I don't think that's a fair question. The question was, would the War Department have allowed a general to speak against universal military training if he was against it?

*Lady:* May I defend my position?

*Mr. Denny:* Yes, go right ahead. (*Laughter.*) Just a couple of Southerners having an argument. I hate to argue with a beautiful little blonde lady in a lovely red dress. (*Laughter.*)

*Lady:* I hate to argue, too, but—

*Mr. Denny:* Well, as a matter of fact, I like it and so do you—so go ahead. (*Laughter.*)

*Lady:* I do believe that the War Department refuses to let its officers speak in public without first approving what they have to say. I know that from certain incidents.

*Mr. Denny:* Well, now, I just doubt that, because nobody censors these speeches and nobody censors what the General says here and nobody censors what any of these generals or lieutenants or captains in uniform have to say out here in the Hall tonight. And I don't think that's a part of our discussion tonight.

Besides, I don't think it's relevant or a fair question. We're delighted to have men in uniform speaking. It's contrary to practice up to the present time, and you don't want to ruin the step in the right direction that has been made here tonight and was made on the program last 15th of November. Mr. Miles, the question was directed to you, and I horned in on it. What do you think about it? Do you think the War Department would permit freedom of speech?

*Mr. Miles:* Certainly. (*Laughter.*)

*Mr. Denny:* All right, next question. Gentleman up there.

*Man:* Mr. Miles, isn't it a fact that Japan had universal military training for decades and she was forced to surrender unconditionally, with armies practically undefeated on the battlefield?

*Mr. Miles:* That's right. The reason Japan was forced to surrender unconditionally was because the American GI and the American officer were better fighting men than the Japs. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Senator?

*Senator Johnson:* Well, Mr. Denny, I can hardly permit that to go unchallenged. (*Applause.*) That wasn't the reason they surrendered. There's no question about the American fighter being superior to them. But we must remember that over three million well-armed, well-equipped soldiers in Japan surrendered when two atomic bombs dropped on them. And there wasn't an American soldier on the Japanese islands at the time. They were glad to surrender. They could do nothing else. Unconditional surrender was the only thing they could do. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Bolte. Yes?

*Mr. Bolte:* And there were also some B-29's and some other air force and quite a lot of Navy out there. (*Laughter and applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* All right. Mr. Miles is coming back. Back to the center of the ring comes Mr. Miles. Go ahead.

*Mr. Miles:* I just wanted to tell you that when a Negro GI out there was asked what he thought about the situation, he said he thought it would be all right to spray them Japs a bit more with that atomizer. (*Laughter.*)

*Senator Johnson:* Mr. Churchill said, however, that if we had to invade the Japanese islands, it would have cost a million American soldiers. And that has been verified and agreed to by many American authorities. One million casualties! (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Senator.

*Lady:* I'd like to ask General McLain a question. Why wouldn't it be possible to include a certain amount of military training in college courses instead of forcing all youth to enter the services?

*Mr. Denny:* General McLain.

*General McLain:* I don't think it is wise to mix the educational—the academic—phase of a young man's education with the military side of it because that violates the principle of simplicity which is to carry on one phase of training at a time. Now, I think the most significant part of this training is the field training. You can't do that if the boys are in high school, because they've got to be away from home. They've got to go out on a night hike like this and live in a field.

It has been my experience on the battlefield that that is one of the great shocks to a young fellow coming in. No matter how much training he had had, unless he had been through this maneuver training and tried to live in conditions and weather like this, it was just about as great a shock to him to go in the front line as it was to experience the shell fire and the bullets. Now, if he can get used to living in this kind of condition, he has solved half of the shock of combat when he goes into the battle line. And he's twice as well prepared to take care of himself.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman, here.

*Man:* A question for General McLain. General McLain, isn't it a little inadequate for our future military and national security to be based upon military leaders who are still making up their opinions on what they've seen happen in the past war rather than what is projected to be happening in the next war?

*Mr. Denny:* General McLain.

*General McLain:* Well, if you could find somebody whose judgment you could rely on—and after all this whole question can't be solved by any exact science, you've got to rely on the judgment of people. My position is that the people who have fought by the older means certainly are our best judges of what will be the conditions under the new means.

I think we will have to proceed along that line of reasoning. Because somebody on the outside who has never seen war, who doesn't know what's going on down in the front lines, who has never been down there, who has never been under fire, is not in as good position to judge what these new weapons will do as a man who's been down there, who has fought the war, who has been responsible for battles, who has fought these battles and won or lost them. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you very much, General. Now, while you

and Mr. Bolte prepare your summaries for this evening's discussion, here is Fred Cole to tell you about next week's topic.

*Mr. Cole:* What is your idea of a fair wage? Perhaps you'll agree with the man who defines a fair wage as just a little bit more than he is getting now. Next week, your Town Meeting tackles one of the most fascinating yet most urgent problems before the country. "Can We Have Higher Wages Without Higher Prices?"

You have a stake in this question. So why not invite your friends over next week so that you can carry on your own discussion after hearing Chester Bowles, Director of the Office of Price Administration, and Congresswoman Chase Going Woodhouse, Democrat of Connecticut, and a member of the League of Women Voters, join issues with Senator Kenneth Wherry, Republican of Nebraska, and Henry Pope, Jr., president of the Bear Brand Hosiery Company?

Next Thursday evening will be League of Women Voters' Night on America's Town Meeting, and we welcome to our radio audience several hundred League of Women Voters' discussion groups organized especially for this purpose.

Two weeks from tonight, friends, Thursday evening, December 20, you'll hear Norman Thomas, Sir Norman Angell, J. J. Singh, and a fourth speaker to be

announced, in a lively discussion of the topic, "Should Colonial Empires Be Liquidated?" But now, let's turn back to tonight's question, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?" and hear the summaries of this important topic, and also the decision of our judges for the winner of the \$25 Victory Bond. Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Fred Cole. Now, Mr. Bolte, may we have your summary for the negative, please?

*Mr. Bolte:* The negative believes, as the affirmative does, that military defense measures are necessary in the present unsettled state of world affairs. It differs sharply with the affirmative in the nature that those measures should take. We believe that for military advice in the modern world, we need to go to the men who know most about the modern world—the scientists.

We agree entirely with General McLain that the velocity of modern war has increased to an unimaginable rate. We hold, therefore, that defense must be based on scientific research and development, on industrial development, on a high-gear technology, and on the training of young men in mechanics, their physical fitness, mental alertness, and their preparation to be free and independent and resourceful citizens. We do not believe that universal military training, as outlined here tonight

or in previous disclosures, fills that bill. We call for a modern defense policy while we work to eliminate war from the world. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Bolte. Now, General McLain, may we have your summary for the affirmative, please?

*General McLain:* I am glad to see that all the speakers here tonight are concerned with the defense of the United States. It is simply a question of judgment as to what methods we should use.

Practically all the speakers have emphasized the atomic bomb. The opposition rests the case entirely upon the atomic bomb. I don't think we've had experience enough with it to cast aside all other means that we've had, and I think we've got to keep our feet on the ground. I can recall that years ago when dynamite was invented, this same prediction was made—that the nation who has this will wipe out all the rest of the face of the earth. War will become so destructive that man cannot live. That's the same thing we are going through now. Dynamite was improved on, and the explosives we used in this war were big improvements on it. At the same time many men lived, in fact most men lived; in comparison, very few died.

I think the atomic bomb has led to more confusion in this issue

than any other one element in it. Possibly it's the biggest question in it. I think it is the biggest question in the minds of the people, and certainly in the minds of everyone concerned with the question. But we've got to keep our feet on the ground, we've got to keep our present machinery, we've got to keep our present processes until we can test these things by actual experience.

Great emphasis is laid on our peace machinery that we are about to create, and certainly we must urge this and do everything possible. But I believe that our Allies who are trying to set up that thing would feel much more secure, much more satisfied that it is going to be a success, if they knew we were prepared militarily to back anything we put into that and to help set up that machinery and see that it goes. I think if they felt that we would stay strong militarily that that would insure the success on that one question. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, General McLain. Last January, we asked for members of the audience to vote on this question, and more than 6,000 persons, representing every state in the Union, sent in their opinions. I won't remind you of the results tonight, but some of you may remember them. We invite you once again to send in your opinion, "Yes," or "No,"

on this topic, "Do We Need Universal Military Training Now?" We'll announce the results next week.

And now before we present our \$25 Victory Bond for this week's best question, let me remind you that you can send in your questions for next week's program by mail, but they must reach us not later than Wednesday noon before the broadcast. Address your questions to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Remember

to limit your questions to 25 words.

Now here's the vote of our judges who have awarded this question the \$25 Victory Bond for tonight's discussion—I quote, "Isn't it inadequate for our future security for the military to base their claims on what has happened during the past wars instead of projecting their thoughts into the future?" Mr. Will Caldwell of New York City. Congratulations, Mr. Caldwell. (*Applause.*)